SOURCE Presents: "The Do's & Don'ts of Community Partnerships"

DO		**DON'T**
Listen to and learn from your community partner Understanding the context and history of the project is an important part of addressing community-identified needs.	vs.	Ask a community organization to just **implement** your program Communities do not want to be "laboratories" for student projects. Imposing your vision will not lead to true collaboration.
Approach involvement as a means for **social change** Think about the impact of your work in the long-term, even if the timetable for your community engagement is only short-term.	vs.	Approach your partnership with the "**Savior Syndrome**" Be careful not to approach your partnerships as a resident "expert." This attitude will not contribute to a balanced, reciprocal partnership.
Be **honest** about the parameters of your **schedule** Open communication is paramount to an effective partnership. Let your partners know what your other obligations are.	vs.	**Overcommit** to a schedule you can't keep Do not view your engagement as optional. Remember that your partners are relying on you to hold up your end of the work.
Dedicate time to growing your partnership Developing the trust and understanding necessary for a good working relationship requires listening, patience, and persistence.	vs.	**Assume** an immediate partnership Partnerships must be built. Do not take your partners or their goodwill for granted!
Consider communities in terms of their **assets** Building upon the strengths of community organizations is just as important as capacity development.	vs.	Focus on the **deficits** of the communities you work with Remember that you are working with passionate and resilient people with years of experience. They know their communities best.
Recognize (and embrace) **lessons** from partners Be careful not to take an attitude of privilege. Be mindful of how this might affect your perceptions and assumptions.	vs.	Expect partners to be **desperate** for any help they can find The community organizations you work within are capable institutions. They need partners, not "helpers," "saviors," or "experts."
Keep the **sustainability** of your partnership in mind Be sure to work with SOURCE, faculty, and students to understand how to continue partnerships when students leave. Various programs and courses exist to help sustain projects.	vs.	**Assume** new students will maintain your connection New students may have different interests, and not continue with your service project. It is always possible to damage or destroy a partnership by walking away without a sustainable plan of action.
Keep SOURCE involved with your experiences Update our office on your community involvement. Don't forget to report your service activities!	vs.	Try to **single-handedly facilitate** your involvement Students are encouraged to work with SOURCE directly, to understand history, context, logistics, policies, and resources for preparation, recruitment, action, reflection, and evaluation.

Sources: *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning* (eds. Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon, Temple UP 2009); Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (http://www.ccph.info); SOURCE (Student Outreach Resource Center)'s "Mutual Expectations for Partners" (http://www.jhsph.edu/bin/c/w/MutualExpectations.pdf).

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